
BARRY GLASSMAN
HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



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Harford County Executive Barry Glassman Presents State of the County Address

Shifting Focus from Capital Projects to People; Combating the Scourge of Heroin

BEL AIR, Md., (Feb. 4, 2015) - After 64 days in office, Harford County Executive Barry Glassman gave his first State of the County address to the County Council Tuesday, identifying the county's fiscal constraints and a shift in priorities under his administration to streamline government, promote economic development and improve customer service. Mr. Glassman also provided a model framework for plans to combat the scourge of heroin, in partnership with state and local agencies.

With only modest revenue increases expected next year, and debt that more than doubled under the prior administration, the new county executive said that he would defer major new capital projects for the near term and focus on people.

"I am content with building good fiscal policy and being judged on the number of Harford lives I've touched, and not the number of ribbons I've cut," Mr. Glassman said.

An avid runner, Mr. Glassman said that he would alter the county's stride to meet future challenges, outlining actions to reduce the size of government and improve efficiency, allowing for a reinvestment in the county workforce. He encouraged outside agencies to make similar changes:

“I am comfortable taking a step back from our capital needs as we focus on jobs, strengthening our communities, and investing in our workforce of county, library, Board of Education and law enforcement employees. I have asked that our partners find efficiencies from within their respective budgets to match our efforts in reorganizing the way we do business. We must come to the realization that the new normal of shrinking enrollments, flat revenues and fewer capital dollars require a fundamental realignment of budgeting, and how services are delivered.”

In addition to scaling back government spending, the county executive cited economic development as a path to a turnaround for Harford County:

“We will continue to grow with our existing small businesses, Aberdeen Proving Ground, our distribution centers, energy projects, manufacturing, farming and cyber/technology. Governor Hogan announced “Maryland is open for business” on inauguration day. My plan is to have Harford County positioned to compete for every new business and every job available.”

The county executive also noted several examples of how his administration was using technology to improve customer service and engage more citizens in local government, including the new online snow plow tracking service and recent virtual town hall meeting.

Finally, Mr. Glassman updated plans first announced at his inauguration to combat the scourge of heroin addiction in Harford County. “Once again in the last seven days I’ve had to console a family devastated by this drug and the loss of a family member... I want to do more than sign an order or appoint another task force,” he said.

Outlining the components of an innovative “Center of Excellence for Heroin Addiction and Overdose Prevention”, Mr. Glassman said that talks were underway with state and local partners for a framework that he hoped would become a model for the state.

Mr. Glassman concluded his address:

“So, for the short term, I am fine with being evaluated on the number of families that I have raised up through new jobs, stronger communities and quality of life, as opposed to the number of steel beams I’ve raised or bricks I lay...So, together, we can keep Harford County poised to be Maryland’s new center of opportunity, where our heritage walks hand in hand with the nation’s new economy.”

The full text of County Executive Glassman’s State of the County address can be found here:

<http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/Executive/speeches/Speech16.pdf>

